(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of Uranium has been found in Meghalaya;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Khasi Student Union (KSU) is creating hindrance in the mining of this Uranium due to which the mining work could not be commenced;

(c) the demands of KSU;

(d) whether the KSU is working under the influence of anti-national elements; and

(e) the action being taken by the Government to expedite mining of Uranium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Khasi Students Union is opposing the Uranium mining on the grounds of influx of outsiders into Meghalaya and perceived health hazards in the mining and adjoining areas.

(d) No authentic information is available in this regard.

(e) The Department of Atomic Energy and Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) have for the last five years been regularly conducting Awareness Programme to clear the misconceptions regarding uranium mining in West Khasi Hills of Meghalaya and also addressing the economic and environmental concerns. Community development programmes about the benefits to society are on for local people including highlighting the economic benefits for the people and the region arising out of mining in Meghalaya. As part of the confidence building measures, visit of local people & NGOs to the operating units of UCIL in Jaduguda were arranged to provide assurance on safety and best environment management practices adopted by UCIL.

Empowered group of Ministers on price of 3G spectrum

3089. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU:
SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) has reserved the price of 3G spectrum at Rs.3,500 crores;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the EGoM; and

(c) by when the process for auctioning of 3G starts and the total spectrum that is proposed for auction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. EGoM in its meeting held on August 27, 2009 besides other issues, inter-alia, decided that the reserve price of 3,500 crores per one block of 2X5 MHz of 3G spectrum in 2.1 GHz band should be adopted. Regarding the quantum of 3

spectrum to be auctioned, EGoM decided that 4 blocks of 2X5 MHz of spectrum in 2.1 GHz band (excluding one block already allotted to BSNL/MTNL) should be auctioned in the Telecom Circles where 20MHz or more spectrum is available. In other telecom Circles, where less than 20 MHz spectrum is available, the number of available 5 MHz blocks should be auctioned (excluding one block already allotted to BSNL/MTNL). Regarding Annual Spectrum Charge and Annual Administrative charges, the EGoM decided that no increase of annual spectrum charges above the existing annual spectrum charges levied for 2G services and no additional annual administrative charges should be levied.

As per the Revised Information Memorandum issued on 23/10/2009, the proposed auction of 3G spectrum shall be held in January, 2010

Blueprint on 3G mobile spectrum

3090. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign telecom companies stayed away from meeting to discuss blue-print on 3G mobile spectrum auction while domestic players were riddled with doubts regarding regulation and availability of airwaves;

(b) whether his Ministry has decided that Department would on December 8 issue final blueprint of auction with regard to number of 3G slots and as of now the information memorandum is document for reference; and

(c) if so, the main reasons for absenting foreign companies and whether any final decision has been announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) to (c) No sir. In the pre-bid conference held on 16/11/2009, prospective foreign and domestic players participated. The queries of all the companies who participated in the conference were clarified. The Notice Inviting Application (NIA) scheduled for 8th December, 09 is in the process of finalization and all queries relating to auction of 3G and BWA spectrum would be addressed in NIA.

Return of government loan by BSNL

3091. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the BSNL has failed to return a Government loan of Rs.7500 crore when it had a disposable reserve of more than Rs.18000 crore;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether BSNL is now paying an interest of over Rs,1000 crore per annum on the loan amount of Rs.7500 crore; and